

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

New open sky regime

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Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether pusing ahead with PM's offer for an open sky in SAARC region, India has sent out detailed letters outlining the offer to all SAARC members except Pakistan and has even extended fifty freedom rights for flights operating within the region;

(b) whether his Ministry has expressed reservations about joining the open sky agreement of ASEAN by 2010 and wants to join regime only after 2012;

(c) whether most of the ASEAN countries plan to follow an open sky regime from 2010 and have invited India to be part of the planned liberalisation;

(d) if so, the main reasons for the same; and.

(e) whether any agreement in this regard has been reached?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. As per the announcement made by the Hon'ble Prime Minister during the last round of SAARC Summit (13th) held in Dhaka on 12-13 November, 2005, an offer was made to Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka for a daily service to the 6-metropolitan cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Bangalore, and an unlimited access to 18 tourist destinations. It was also proposed that the designated airlines of these countries may utilize 5th freedom rights within SAARC region. Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka have already accepted this offer.

(b) to (e) As regards the ASEAN countries Open Sky regime from 2010, no decision has been taken, as yet, to join the same.